

REMARKS

In response to the Official Action mailed December 23, 2002, Applicants amend their application and request reconsideration. No claims are added or cancelled so that claims 1-4 remain pending.

In this Amendment, part of the limitation of claim 2 is moved into claim 1. That limitation is that the optical lens system comprises two fixed lens groups. The only other changes in the claims are grammatical changes in claims 1, 2, and 3. The change to claim 2 conforms to the movement of a phrase from claim 2 into claim 1.

Claims 1-4 were rejected as anticipated by Ito et al. (U.S. Patent 6,115,191, hereinafter Ito). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In describing claim 2 and referring to Ito, the Examiner asserted that Ito describes a lens system including "two fixed lens groups (120, 140)," with the movable lens group 130 being disposed between the two fixed lens groups. This analysis is incorrect.

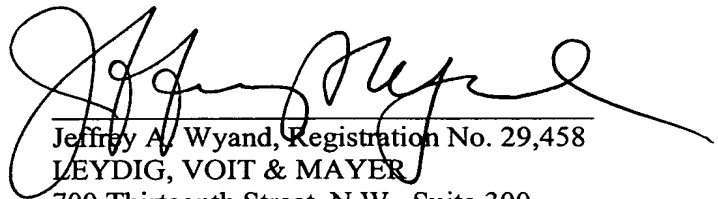
Although there is only limited, if any, discussion concerning lens group 140 in the text of Ito, the operation of that lens group 140 becomes apparent upon studying Figures 3 and 4 of Ito. Figure 3 represents a wide-angle state of the lens system, see Ito at column 3, lines 4-6 and column 6, lines 64-67. Figure 4, on the other hand, shows the zoom lens barrel in a "tube retracting state". It is apparent that in these two different states that the lens group 140 changes position with respect to the barrel 70, as does the movable lens group 130. Only lens 120 remains in a fixed position relative to the barrel 70. Therefore, a fundamental error was made in characterizing lens group 140 as fixed. Since the lens group 140 is movable, not fixed, claim 2 as examined and claim 1 as now presented cannot be anticipated by Ito because Ito does not include two fixed lens groups. It follows that no pending claim can be anticipated by Ito.

Claim 2, as amended, clearly cannot be anticipated by Ito. The fixed lens group in Ito has to be lens 120. It is apparent that no movable lens group can be disposed between two fixed lens groups in Ito because Ito does not have two fixed lens groups. Thus, independent of the action on claim 1, the rejection with regard to amended claim 2 cannot be properly maintained.

In re Appln. of: NOZAWA (Deceased) et al.
Application No. 09/899,191

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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